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## *The Spy Scene in Africa*

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*Algiers.*

When an amorous Soviet spy in London recently bought himself an iron curtain that would divide both him and his mistress from their tiresome ties in Mother Russia (by defecting with the local KGB personnel list), the Heath government discreetly claimed a triumph for Western democracy for a whole three days—before saying that, by the way, a certain Irina Teplyakova had “come over” along with Oleg Lyalin.

In Africa, too, we like a little decorum in our security leaks. A number of years ago, in another country, I was serving as counselor to the prime minister of Togo. Ghana was threatening to annex us: its president, Kwame Nkrumah, knowing that any self-respecting expansionist power must have its advance intelligence, had sent us—as what Russians would call the *Rezident*—an irrepressibly jolly spy who threw parties for the Togolese opposition, and sounded out their desire for posts under some future Ghanaian raj.

The head of Togo's thimble-sized FBI, a disabused Claude Rains understudy called Georgin (who was later promoted to head the Vice Squad in Marseilles) welcomed the Ghanaian's tactics. All his plainclothes flatfeet had to do was bird-dog everyone who went to the fellow's parties.

But a minister took umbrage at this overt subversion. Georgin and I argued in vain that overt subversion was the best, that if the champagne spy departed it might take many weeks or months—or forever—to uncover his more discreet replacement. But the minister convinced his colleagues, and the jolly agent had to go. If we were going to be spied on, dammit, let it be decently in secret.

Discretion about espionage was demonstrated this year in Senegal. In January, a routine check revealed a bug in the desk of the U.S. ambassador. No great sleuthing was needed to unloak the culprit,

an embassy local employee. The Senegalese fuzz took over the questioning, and the first kick had barely scattered a couple of teeth before he was fingering his suborner, one of the five Soviet “correspondents” in Dakar.

Because virtually all Soviet journalists abroad—and absolutely all Communist Chinese ones—are full-time spies, the independence of the Western pressman from his government is something many African leaders find almost unbelievable. Suspicion invariably falls in our direction, especially in capitals like this, where almost every Eastern European agent seems to have a press card.

Back in 1967, I agreed to be a part-time professor at Dakar University's infant journalism institute. I was on leave in Europe when an anguished letter arrived from the institute's director. He was sorry, but the arrangement was off. A trustee of the institute had insisted that I should not be allowed to brainwash the students. He knew for a fact that I worked for the CIA.

## NOVOSTI EXPOSES ANOTHER ANTI-SOVIET FORGERY

✓ Last week the Novosti Press Agency (APN) called a press conference in Moscow to denounce a crude anti-Soviet forgery.

✓ It is a booklet, entitled *The Soviet Union and Islam*, purporting to be published by Novosti and allegedly written by Rafik Nishanov, the Soviet Ambassador to Ceylon.

It was, said Karen Khachaturov, vice-chairman of the Novosti board, full of insults against the Moslem faith, and plainly intended to create anti-Soviet feeling among Moslems and in predominantly Moslem countries.

✓ It completely falsified the Soviet position on the national question.

The booklet has been circulated in Ceylon, Egypt and other Islamic countries.

Khachaturov pointed out that the dissemination of anti-Soviet material in the guise of Novosti publications was no new thing.

In 1969, for instance, what purported to be a Novosti Press Bulletin was put out in Dakar,

capital of Senegal, full of provocative statements about another African country, the Ivory Coast.

The government of the Ivory Coast unfortunately, took it as authentic and used it as a pretext for breaking off diplomatic relations with the USSR.

That booklet was quickly exposed as a forgery, even Victor Zorza — a journalist with no sympathy for the Soviet Union — describing it in *The Guardian* as a CIA concoction. ✓

Material alleged to be from Novosti had also been forged in Guinea and the Congo.